

/15 cont. /

462 morocco-leather (tsush) so popular with foreigners; this tsush
 [281] serves in Abkhazia for bedding in summer. The men make
 [513] beautiful spoons out of wood and animal horns. Many hunters
 [212] kill seven or eight bears a year, but do not sell the skins. In
 437 general buying and selling in Abkhazia are done by barter;
 money is not used in these cases.

The main sources of food of the Abkhaz are agriculture,
 433 cattle-breeding, and to a certain extent, apiculture. In the
 [231] foothills the Abkhaz often possess as many as 200 and more
 [241] beehives. Nowadays they sow maize and occasionally wheat.
 A few years ago, gomi (ghomi) /millet/ was considered the main
 and most widespread cereal, but now maize has completely
 supplanted it. Besides this, tobacco, cotton, flax, hemp, and
 vegetables are sown, but in limited quantity and only for home use.

133 Cattle constitute the main wealth of the Abkhaz; in
 [556] their opinion this is the main support of the life of man; it is
 what feeds him, makes him grow, and preserves him. The
 Abkhaz cannot conceive of life without cattle; one can somehow
 manage to get along without bread, but not without cattle.
 This conception is especially true of the herdsmen, of whom it
 [262] may be said /16/ that they live almost exclusively on meat and
 milk. To feed his herd, not infrequently consisting of no more
 than two or three head of cattle, the Abkhaz, when grass gave
 out in one place, would move to another place where grass was
 easier to find, taking along his phatskha (hut of wattles). So it
 [178] was until the last war; after that the main attention of the
 [243] Abkhaz was concentrated on the sowing of maize, the export
 of which is growing day by day.

342 The structure of the Abkhaz house, the phatskha, is simple.
 In appearance it is round or rectangular. The walls of the
phatskha slope upwards and are woven together with thin nut-
 twigs; on top of these rests a cone-shaped roof; the top of the
 cone is tied together with willow-branches or twigs; the branches
 are supported by little poles (dardzagini /see foreign text/). This
 [324] simple structure is covered with ferns, reeds, or spear-grass
 (Agrostis vulgaris).

/44 cont. /

7.

782
585
[776] The Prayer Ceremony in Honor of Azhahara

The Abkhaz call the protector or genius of the house and hearth by the name Azhahara in whose honor is performed the ceremony for a young married couple in the stage of their marriage before they have appeared together before their elders and the young woman is for the first time led into her husband's main house, or when the bride is invited into her father's house. One of the oldest members of the family sticks pieces of the heart and liver of a sacrificial animal on a spit and begs Azhahara to protect the young couple at home and out of doors.

8.

Alishkantra

782
231
[776] Alishkantra is the "mistress" of dogs. In the opinion of the Abkhaz, the owner of good dogs will also be fortunate in the multiplication of his cattle; good fortune in dogs is associated with good fortune in all domestic animals. Therefore before praying to other god-protectors of domestic and wild animals, the Abkhaz prays to Alishkantra to grant him luck with good dogs and the opportunity to raise and breed them.

9.

/45/ A Prayer in Honor of Zhabran

[776]
[796]
[262] Zhabran is the protector of animals. Every Abkhaz owning cattle performs the prayer-ceremony in his honor on "Cheese Saturday." For this they prepare suluguni (a big cheese) called "sacred cheese"; bread dough is placed on the hearth, in which a man puts a core of suluguni, whereupon he prays, "Prefer me to all those pronouncing your name;

/45 cont. /

782

231

make my cattle multiply; make them increase to such an extent that in the future I may pray to you and offer you a cheese as big as this loaf of bread and my courtyard will have no room for all my cattle. Preserve my cattle from all trouble and misfortunes both at home and outside; grant that my cattle will lose only old hair and dung; grant that my herd will be so large that an animal walking in the rear will be unable to overtake one running in the front; may the calves play like young bears and shine like young stallions. This I ask of you." Then the person praying puts three walnut branches in the bread dough and, striking against the ceiling, exclaims, "Voots! chipsh!" (a call to summon cattle). The same ceremony is performed on the Thursday of "Cheese-week" in honor of the protector of goats; it is called Dzhabran.

[796]

10.

A Prayer in Honor of Aithar

[796]

Aithar is the protector of domestic cattle and the farm economy. The prayers to him are held on a Saturday, except during Lent, because offerings to him must consist of milk products, and among the rich the offering is a milk-fed calf. The customary dish at this time is a thin gruel made with the milk of a cow that has recently calved. The shepherds stand around a kettle or pot filled with gruel; the oldest of them, holding a wax candle, pronounces a prayer: "Aithar, grant me superiority above all those who pronounce your name." He then begs Aithar to increase his herds and to protect them from beasts of prey. Upon concluding /46/ the prayer, the shepherd throws three spoonfuls of gruel into a brazier with coals standing nearby, and the participants eat the rest. If the inhabitants of the whole village or a part of it perform the ceremony in honor of Aithar, then a calf is sacrificed, which is slaughtered by the most respected old man, who first pronounces a prayer. After the meat of the calf has been cooked or roasted, the same old man

[796]

/46 cont. /

1882
231 pronounces a prayer the second time, cutting off pieces from different parts of the animal and offering them to Aithar by throwing them on the red-hot coals.

11.

Azhvephshaa (Abn-intsvakhu)

1882
224
[1796]
[1796] Azhvephshaa is the god of the forests and wild animals. Hunters sacrifice to him before setting out on a hunt, usually the middle or at the end of December. For the sacrifice, they jointly buy a ram or a goat. When it is roasted, the oldest huntsman prays to Azhvephshaa to send success for their undertaking; at the conclusion of the prayers, he throws small pieces of roasted meat and a piece of incense on the coals. Each of the remaining hunters repeats the prayer in turn, adding his own wishes and indicating the particular animal he would like to kill, while throwing pieces of incense on the coals.

12.

Dzhadzha and Anaphanga

1882
241
[1796]
[1796] Dzhadzha is the patroness of the crops. Prayers to her are offered twice a year: in March, at the beginning of spring, and in November, after the maize has been stored. Praying to Dzhadzha is not accompanied by any special solemnity; it is performed quietly by each individual family. Rich landowners sometimes invite their former dependents to the prayer, particularly those who have taken part in the sowing and reaping of their crops. On the day set aside for prayer, dishes made exclusively of grain and fruits grown by the master of the house are prepared. After the food has been placed on the table, the oldest member of the family /47/ addresses a prayer to Dzhadzha, thanking him for the good harvest or begging him to send everything in abundance. For the spring prayer to Dzhadzha, all the dishes prepared are lenten.

/47 cont./

782
241
[776] The Abkhaz asks of Anaphanga, the goddess of crops:
"Wherever I draw my furrow and strike with iron and with
implement, may an abundance of grain be granted me;
grant happiness to the sower and to the consumer." During
reaping, when the sheaves are first brought home, the
Abkhaz prays in honor of Anaphanga; during the fast of
Assumption, however, a cross is made of the ears; kernels
of maize and beans are fastened to a candle to avert possible
harm by evil spirits, e.g., by Dzhadzha herself. This
[776] Dzhadzha is an ugly goddess, short and fat; when she comes
into a field she exclaims, "Natsvis, natsvis" (little finger!
little finger!), i.e., the wish that the maize in that field
grow no higher than a little finger, but if one pursues
Dzhadzha with the words, "Raki dzaki, raki dzaki" ("cubit-
span, cubit-span"), she leaves the field and her wish does
not come true.

[243] Before the threshing of the gomi /millet/ the Abkhaz
pray to the great goddesses to keep the whole family in good
health and to permit the whole household in future, and at
the head the lady of the house herself, to gather at the beater
for the threshing of the gomi (satsekhveli).

13.

A Prayer for the Bees

782
231 The Abkhaz bake a round loaf of bread with cheese,
take it to the bee-garden, and pray to Ananagunda for the
preservation of their bees; upon returning home, they break
the loaf and eat it without looking at one another, for which
some stand facing one door, some another.

14.

Prayer to the Sun and the Moon

782
821 The Abkhaz addresses the sun with the following prayer:
"Sunlight; withhold not your benevolence from us, warmth

/58 cont./

731 donkey is brought, which they cover with a white sheet and
789 put the doll on it. One of the girls takes the donkey by the
rein, while two others support the doll, and they set out for
the place where the raft was made. The other girls ac-
company the procession on both sides, singing "dziva dziva
[639] dzvari! Kva kva mykryld aphsh-akh ipha did shivait dzy
khychik, dzy khuchik," which means, "To get water, water!
To get rainwater; a red daisy! Son of the Lord, we thirst
for a little water, a little water!" When they come to the
river, they take the doll from the donkey, put it on the raft,
and, setting the straw afire, let it float downstream; they
then try to chase the donkey into the water, which, of course,
requires no small effort. At last the donkey is dragged into
the river, and, emerging on the opposite bank, he begins
[825] to bray, which is considered the surest sign of forthcoming
rain. If, however, the donkey fails to bray, the same cere-
mony is repeated anew on the following day or the next
day after that.

25.

Saints

776 Independent of the general worship of all the deities dis-
778 cussed above, the inhabitants of the villages of Lykhny,
[184] Lzaa, and Ilori are under the protection of saints, to whom
the churches erected in those villages are dedicated; or,
more correctly, who are under the protection of the churches
themselves. In Lykhny each family invokes the protection
of Anan-Lykhnykh (the Virgin Mother of Lykhny), in Lzaa,
of Anan-Lzaanykh (the Virgin Mother of Lzaa, i. e., the
cathedral of Pitsunda dedicated to the Holy Virgin), in Ilori,
of Tsminda Giorgi (the cathedral of St. George). To invoke
their protection, sacrifices must be offered, which are, in
[796] fact, brought by each family once a year on a Sunday
evening.

782
[796]
● [231] - On the day set aside for the offering, the best year-old

/58 cont./

782
231 heifer is selected from the herd, and in the evening it is brought into the house where the family that is invoking the church's grace has its permanent residence. A supper is prepared, consisting of cooked or roast mutton, and the whole family washes and puts on clean linen. The head of the family takes a wax candle in one hand and in the other the rope tied around the calf's neck; he addresses the /59/ cathedral with a prayer for his protection and that of his family; he states that the calf will be dedicated to the church and that all its male offspring will be sacrificed to it, and that, instead of heifers, rams will be sacrificed. After this prayer an incision is made in the calf's ear; from this time on it is considered inviolable and cannot be used for food. On the day of its dedication to the cathedral the calf must spend the night in the house with the family.

782
778 If an inhabitant of one of the three above-mentioned villages moves away, he is obliged to bring an offering each year to the cathedral in the village of his birth. Girls from these villages who marry inhabitants of other villages are not exempt from this rule. They as well as their children are still regarded as under the protection of the cathedrals of Lykhny, Pitsunda, or Ilori and are therefore obliged to offer sacrifices to them.

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539 /A supplement on pp. 60-64, containing Abkhaz sayings and proverbs, is omitted in the translation; see foreign text./

[757 cont.]

K
233 The Kabardin still occupy themselves principally with the raising of sheep, goats, cattle, and horses, which have Arabic blood, are taller and more powerfully built than the Abkhaz horses, and are famous for their beauty and endurance.

C
241 The other Cherkess have changed over more to agriculture since the end of the fighting with the Russians.

They clear the land that they wish to seed, burn off the grass in the spring, as is also done on the pastures and meadows, and then plow and harrow with the brush-harrow [Strauchegge] (see above, p. 686 [untranslated]); until recently there was no fertilization with manure. Earlier, when the land around a village was exhausted, they merely dismantled the huts and settled in another place.

C
256 While the grain is ground in a water or horse mill, millet is husked by means of a pitted surface [Anke] (see above, p. 693 [untranslated]) and a wooden disk turned by hand, as is customary in Finland, and ground with a hand-mill by the women.

A
231 Bees are often kept here, as in Abkhazia.

The beehives resemble those commonly used by us; they are cut out of linden bark or plaited out of willow twigs and smeared with clay and cow manure. As protection from the rain, a thick straw plaiting is laid on top. [758] Swarms that have flown out are caught with a bark cover fastened on a stick. In July and August, the hives are placed in the forests of the foothills, otherwise near the villages.

A
462 The women have the same tasks as among the mountain peoples; among the Abkhaz, however, the men help in the fields, fruit orchards, vineyards, and at other tasks. Among other things, the women also produce morocco leather (tsuś), from which belts, shoes, bedding, etc. are made. Besides vessels and utensils, the men carve beautiful spoons out of wood and horn, build wagons (zku) with two disk-wheels that are hewn out of a single piece of wood and the axle turns with them (cf. Fig. 416 [in untranslated portion]). They used to produce their own gunpowder, leeching the saltpeter (gin-khuś = powder-salt) for it from sheep manure. [Fig. 450 appears here.]

A
[281]
E
[212]
[293]
A
[389]

C [769 cont.]

796 and lighted with lamps, is set up in the house of an elder of the
 782 kin group. An animal is sacrificed in honor of the god, and after
 the feast the cheese is distributed among the participants as a
 magical remedy. Other festivals are celebrated: for the new year
 and for Easter, in March, when one first fasts, then slaughters an
 offering in the sacred grove, and enjoys himself by shooting at
 eggs, etc.; at the beginning of the harvest, when roasted unripe
 wheat with sour milk, and later other kinds of grain and fruit,
 are eaten as festive dishes; in October when the plants wither, etc.

A
 796 The Abkhaz show their reverence for the gods and spirits
 782 at given occasions or on certain holidays by the sacrificial offer-
 ing of animals, milk, bread, and other things, and by prayers,
 which are often constructed with a wealth of words and are poeti-
 cally exalted.

Thus, on New Year's Eve they kneel in prayer, sprinkling
 incense on a coal-pan, around a rectangular cheese-cake
 (suluguni)--this custom is called Kalinda, cf. the Kolinda of the
 Rumanians and others--and on New Year's Day the father of the
 house lays wheat bread with an egg baked in it on everyone's
 breast, and he directs the "heart-prayer" (gunykhwa) to God,
 that they may be protected from heart disease. On Christmas
 Day between the first crow of the cock and daybreak he begs that
 they be spared from stomach ailments; afterwards everyone eats
 a chicken and four small pieces of cheese-bread (kwakwari). The
 celebration of Syosu is also held on New Year's Eve, especially by
 the smiths. Here the father of the house prays to him for health
 and protection against harm from their work tools, and he throws
 into the fire pieces of curd-cake and of the heart and liver from
 the sacrificial animals: a sheep or calf for the father of the house,
 a rooster for each member of the family [Familie].

A
 233 Before driving the animals into the mountains and after
 782 driving them from there, the herdsmen sacrifice a ram in honor
 796 of the god of lightning (Ap'i, khakhikal = he who lives above,
 782 called Sible by the Cherkess) and pray that he spare them and
 their herds. When an animal is killed by lightning, [770] the
 233 owner calls out all the villagers; while singing and dancing

[770 cont.]

231 (atlar-tšoup'), they lay the animal on a quickly erected, three-meter-high framework or in a tree. The owner sacrifices an ox and prays to be spared in the future; then they eat the meat of the sacrificial animal, bread, and cheese, drink wine, and feast the entire day. The Abkhaz proceed in the same way for a person struck by lightning, but no one may weep lest the god become angry (see p. 87).

789 During drought one also turns to Ap'i to send rain; an ox is sacrificed, and at the feast songs of thanks and praise (antšva-rysšva) are sung in alternating chant. In order to evoke rain magic similar to that customarily practiced among the Balkan peoples is used (cf. also p. 64). The girls from the village stricken with drought place a female doll embodying the drought on a donkey and lead it to the river; here they put the doll on a raft made of twigs and straw, ignite it, and allow it to drift. They pull the donkey by force through the water, and if he brays, there will be rain.

755 Various gods are called upon in case of illness. Ague, delirium, and the like accompanying serious illness are attributed to the presence of the supreme god (Antsar mzy) in the body of the sufferer. In order to cure him, they sing and dance about him and even force him to do the same; then they sacrifice bread and a goat or sheep in the vicinity of the house, during which no woman may be present; an old man with a candle circles the sick person and pleads with the god to forgive him and deliver him. He also prays afterwards to Michael-Gabriel.

776 In case of fever they look for help from the "Mother of the Waters"; she lives, according to them, in a clear lake or spring, is beautiful, has brown hair and laughing eyes, and likes to live for a while with a man, like the mermaids. An old woman touches the water with some object belonging to the feverish person and begs the goddess to release him if she has enthralled him. Then she ladles up a few drops of water on some alder-leaves and holds them over the fire in the house so that the fever may leave as quickly as the water on the leaves. Finally the old woman moves away quickly, with the wish that the fever, too,

[770 cont.]

755 might leave. As soon as the afflicted person is able, he himself goes to the water with a prayer-woman; there he kneels and
 [782] offers up a hen to the mother of the waters, a rooster to her husband, and a candle to each of them and to her female servant (Abza 'avabzats'av = benefactress, intercessor). The woman prays and strokes the sick person on the back for "deliverance" (azati).

If someone suffers from jaundice or debility, [771] the "irreproachable" elders lead him to the river, lay his clothing, silver articles, etc. on both banks, and make a bridge of twisted yarn over the river; the prayer-woman then circles the sick person with a doll and prays to the rainbow in the name of the Eliap'yi, to the mother of the waters, and to her husband. She
 [782] casts into the water pieces of the food that was brought along: roasted chickens, tongue-shaped flat cakes, etc., and she allows the doll to float downstream in a gourd with a burning candle, while she prays that the goddess amuse herself with it rather than with the sick person. Finally she gives the latter "deliverance," and he may not look back on the way home (cf. p. 924 f. [untranslated]).

231
 789 When rinderpest struck, the Kemirkehe used to dig a tunnel in a steep river-bank and in the middle of this a pit in which they fastened a black cat with a silver belt. They covered the pit with boards and earth, ignited a fire on top by rubbing two sticks together, and drove the cattle through the river and the tunnel, to the accompaniment of the priests' litany. Afterwards the cat was freed.

842 The above-mentioned threefold prayer at the water is aimed at fertility when one "leads to the water" a young woman for the first time, during which an egg is thrown in, and, in the
 844 case of a woman in childbed, food for the infant.

787
 [821] The Abkhaz read signs for future events, for a favorable or unfavorable outcome for undertakings, from the stars; from the form of the moon, from meeting certain animals or human beings, and also, in the manner of the Tatars, from the cracks in a sheep's shoulder-blade that has been cast into the fire (see Vol. II, p. 325).

796 *a-khwazhw* and entreats god *Alëshkintz* to grant the house faithful dogs—those best friends of man and reliable watchers of his weal; the prayer at the same time spills some of the hot *a-k'warapd* or *a-*

797 *k'warpd* (a thick broth of *a-khwazhw*, or millet) towards the sea and some towards the mountains, uttering "Wootsw! Burn out the tongue of the evil-speaker, the eyes of the evil-eyed", and continues his prayer.

798 In the opinion of the commission, *Alëshkintz* is also "part" of *Ayt'ar*.

799 *Ala* denotes dog; *shkintz*, however, is incomprehensible.

The commission explained that "dog" was mentioned before
[23] "man" on account of the former being more capable of loyalty to a master than the latter.

671 It should be noted that the common law values the blood of a
685 dog in proportion to that of its owner; the blood of a baron's dog is
825 equal to that of a baron, of a peasant's to that of a peasant, etc.

539 From the lips of K. Dolbaia (Abkh. Delba), an 80-year-old Abkha-
231 sian, who possesses an expert knowledge of the Abkhasian language, I wrote down the following tale:—

"In ancient times, when Abkhasia was inhabited by giants and devas (daevas), Aslan, one of the giants, would not leave the devas in peace. Once, when he was asleep, the devas crept up stealthily, bound him with silk laces, blinded and killed him, and threw him into a pit as deep as a well. On their return from their usual hunting expedition, his dogs discovered their master, but they could not pull him out of the well. They fell upon an ox-cart driver who happened to be passing by, and compelled him to rescue their master from the well and unbind him. The dogs licked Aslan for three days and three nights, and so brought him back to life and restored his sight."¹

The following superstition prevails among the Abkhasians. If
[82] someone, noticing the heavens bursting open, succeeds in uttering *Läri, vāri, khazē, jkhvāri*, he will have all his wishes fulfilled. Only one woman was honoured with this great good fortune, the widow of a Mukvabba. *Läri* is interpreted as *lala* which denotes dog; *vāri* (*vāri* from *awryō*,* man) as man; *khazē* as whey; *jkhvāri* as the crust of millet porridge; uttered together they are supposed to mean "make me rich". My Abkhasian advisers repeatedly emphasized that the dog was mentioned first because of its unexampled loyalty and fidelity to man, his master.

7176 (d) *Amia-nəhwa*, Prayer to the Moon.

796 The supplicant takes the moon-shaped cake and says: "Thou,

[104] * See p. 122, note *. According to Marr, the throat participates vigorously in the pronunciation of this composite or diffusive sound, and in a way as if the sound of the guttural "s" (the ancient Arabic 'sīn) were also heard. [TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.]

[177] ¹ The Academician N. Y. Marr has kindly directed my attention to Moses of Khoren, who describes how by order of Semiramis, the dogs of *Arak* (cf. *Alëshkintz*) licked the corpse of *Arz* or *Arak*, the Armenian Prince, in order to revive him.

796
[169] On this day also they "lay the table", that is, prepare a dinner, for the souls of the deceased, unless the day happens to be one of abstinence, i.e. Wednesday or Friday. In the latter event the feast takes place on the following day.

(e) *Adsyla-nàhwa*

On the same day of the Assumption is observed *Adsyla-nàhwa* (cf. II (10)). The children are taken to a meadow where they are told to place their right legs against a tree. Each holding an *akwakwâr* in the right hand, they remain meekly in this position until the eldest in the family has addressed the prayer to "the spirit of the tree", entreating "the great part of the deity of the tree" to safeguard them from giddiness, from falling off the tree, and from injuries. The children must eat their *akwakwâr* without removing their legs from the tree.

(f) *Anàna-gùnda* (the goddess of bees)

796
• 231 This is both a spring and a summer feast.
[170] In the spring, when the bees begin to hive, the eldest ("pure") woman of the family takes some hirse (Geo. *p'etvi*) and an egg, and enters the apiary, where she passes the offerings three times over the hives, and prays to the goddess of the bees, *Anàna-gùnda*: "Submitting these as a pledge that the established offering will be made at the proper time, I humbly entreat thee, *Anàna-gùnda*, to be the guardian of our bees; safeguard them from all illnesses, multiply them, and grant them a good crop!" Hirse and the egg are hung over the apiary.

[172] In the summer, between the 15th July and the end of August, before the gathering of the first honeycombs, more during August, on a Thursday or Saturday, the promised offering to the goddess *Anàna-gùnda* is made. A large corncake (*a-mgal*), stuffed with cheese, is baked, and placed on one of the hives; also an egg. The family kneel in front of the offering, and the "pure" woman again invokes the mercy of *Anàna-gùnda* upon the honey bees, and says an improvised prayer. The family repeat a long drawn out *dàmen*.

[171] After the ceremony, she divides the corncakes crosswise, into four parts, with two strokes of the knife; and cuts these into smaller pieces. The family sit down there and then and dine. They do not forget the neighbours, sending a small piece each. The remains are placed in a basket and hung up in the apiary. Everybody passing by is obliged to enter the apiary and bless the honey bees and, scattering about a little hirse, eat a piece of corncake.

[178] In ancient times when the Abkhassians irreproachably observed all the rites, the gods were more merciful to them. Thus, the goddess

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of the bees as a sign of her good disposition towards a given family ^{Thus, the goddess} placed an egg (the egg of *Andna-gānda*) in one of the hives. No matter ²³¹ how much honey they took from that hive, there would always be ⁷⁷⁶ a plentiful supply of it.¹

IV. K'IRSA

Christmas is one of the four chief holidays ⁷⁹⁶ of the year. Abkhasians call it *K'irsa* (Megr. *K'irsa*), which denotes Christ. An Abkhas considers it a great disgrace if he fails on this day to kill a goat or some other animal. On this day "the table is laid" also for the souls ^[769] of ancestors.

(a) *Agwa-nōhwa*

For some families it is obligatory to make an offering early in the morning on this day to *Agwa-nōhwa*, for which *akwakwār* are baked. The supplicant entreats that *Agwa-nōhwa* grant them the warmth of his eyes and his heart. In translation the word denotes, "praying to heart." This "praying" is also known to the Gurians, under the name of "praying for the womb" (Geo. *Mutlis salotsavi*); ^[771] Megrelians call it *Khatsitsi*.² According to I. Kipshidze, it is the New Year's Day breakfast.³ In my opinion it is nothing more than a survival of the supplication described below.

(b) *Go'anūa* (*sharp'-nōhwa*)

Some *gvari*-s have preserved to this day the following custom. On Christmas Eve, the family go to bed very early; they rise, however, at midnight, and begin praying. Enough chickens are killed to provide one for every member of the family (blackbirds also may be used), ²⁶² or in their place a young goat; *akwakwār* baked. All this is offered to *Go'anūa*; the food is consumed immediately after the prayer is ended, and the remains, if any, are not left but burnt without fail. ⁷⁸² All return to bed. The dawn must find them asleep. In Megrelian *go'anua* denotes morning-twilight, dawn, to grow light, to dawn, the Abkhasian equivalent of which is *sharp'-nōhwa*, the morning prayer; the Megrelian term, however, is more in use.

I quote here the following story: "A female slave of a family,

¹ *Andna*, in my opinion, is derived from *an*, mother; *gānda*, probably from *gundi*, a swarm, a collection of something.

² Namely, the New Year, Easter, the Assumption, and Christmas.

³ *Khatsitsi*—*khatsitsi* is called also a bride. (Cf. I. Kipshidze, *Gram. of the Megrelian Language*, s.v. *khatsitsi*.) (Ed. Khrist. Postok.)

⁴ *Grammar of the Megrelian Language*, s.v. (where is also a reference to the explanation of the same word in Georgian by V. Beridze, *Silqviskhona*, s.v., Ed. Kā. V.).

776 who transgress against him. In order to avoid incurring the anger of
 831 this god, an Abkhaz will not draw water or wash himself when the
 515 rainbow is in the sky, and is generally careful about the use of water.
 755 Like any other god, *Atswagwa* may bestow the "warmth of his eyes
 and his heart", in return for offerings and prayers. Whoever is affected
 by his wrath, grows icteritious, emaciated, to save his life he must,
 at the direction of the sorceresses, make the following offering to the
 rainbow god:—

On one of the Thursdays¹ the old ("pure") women take the sick
 person to the river, pass (Geo. *shemoavleben*) around his head 4-5 yards
 of variegated chintz, and pray: "The great god! Acknowledging his
 transgressions this sick person (the name is mentioned) has appeared
 before thee, and humbly entreats thee to accept this chintz as a pledge
 that he will perform the established offering at the proper time, at
 the direction of the sorceresses!"

On the following Thursday he is taken again to the same river
 and place. Usually three women say the prayer, but there may be
 seven. Men, with the exception of the patient, are not allowed to
 [562] be present at this ceremony. The sick person is dressed entirely in
 white. The eldest woman² kills a capon and a hen; women carry
 out all the duties, preparing *ashwamkydt'*, "*ghomi*" (millet pudding),
akwakvár, and *atcha-gvazdl* (Geo. *ghvzeli*, an oblong bread), of each
 of which there must be seven of the usual, and seven of the very small
 [782] size. All these are placed on *ashwamkydt'*, on which also burn seven
 wax candles. The prayer is said by the eldest woman. The patient
 kneels in front of the offering; he is taken home immediately the
 [184] ceremony is over, and he must not look back. The seven small *akwakvár*,
atcha-gvazdl, and seven small portions of *ghomi* (*abdt'a*—millet porridge),
 are thrown into the water; they represent the share of the female
 [776] slaves (*ah'ap'hwis*) of the rainbow god. Everything else is consumed
 by the women themselves; the remains being thrown into the river,
 for nothing must be taken home.

Muhammadans must also burn candles at this offering. The candles
 are fixed on a kind of hoop made of grape vine. At the end of the
 ceremony the hoop with the burning candles is thrown into the
 river.

776 It should be noted that in some parts of the country this god is
 184 called *Atswagwa-elia* (the Rainbow-Elijah). So at least he was called,
 according to the testimony of D. I. Gulia, by Javaz, the famous woman
 supplicant.

¹ Thursday in Megrelian is *tsakhla*, the day of the sky. It is noteworthy that the
 Abkhazians perform usually on the day of the sky, the majority of rites that are
 seemingly connected with the sky, as in the case given.

² The Abkhazian women kill animals only on occasions of certain offerings.